



Things to eat with your shoggoth bread...



Chaz
 [cvillette](https://cvillette.livejournal.com/)

<https://cvillette.livejournal.com/>
2008-04-07 08:55:00

MOOD: 😊 hungry

MUSIC: Everlast - Lonely Road

AVGOLEMONO!

Isn't that fun to say? Avgolemono. Avgolemono. *Avgolemono!* If I were Harry Potter, I would wave my wand around and conjure up a comforting bowl of soup. (Now I am imagining a parody version of Potter set at a culinary school, where all the magical commands are culinary terms, and the students use whisks and wooden spoons to conjure with.)

Avgolemono is one of those incredibly comforting and simple foods. It has four essential ingredients--chicken stock, rice, lemon juice, and eggs. I originally learned how to make it from

 [leahbobot](https://leahbobot.livejournal.com/) (<https://leahbobot.livejournal.com/>). Basically, you get about a quart of chicken stock, simmer a small quantity of white rice (a handful--call it a quarter cup) in it until the rice is cooked and the stock is cloudy, then drizzle about a quarter of that stock a bowl containing two eggs that have been beaten with the juice of one lemon, while continuing to whisk the eggs.

This process is called tempering. The idea is to raise the temperature of the eggs slowly, while diluting them so that they do not curdle and become lumpy.

Then you return the stock with the tempered eggs to the main pot and cook it slowly for five minutes or until it thickens, while stirring constantly and without allowing it to simmer or come to a boil.

Last night, I was flipping through the *Cook's Illustrated Best International Recipe* cookbook looking for something quick and easy and comforting to make for dinner for  [trollcatz](https://trollcatz.livejournal.com/) (<https://trollcatz.livejournal.com/>) and T. and Tasha, after the Climbing Incident. Complication: we were at Tasha's place, and her kitchen looks exactly like the kitchen of somebody

who lives on takeout salads and sushi from Whole Paycheck. But she did have the cookbook, and a lemon and eggs and a can of chicken broth, and some leftover white rice from Chinese takeout. Score!

And she has this Penzey's gift box somebody who doesn't know her very well gave her as an apartment-warming present, so I was able to raid for cardamom and a bay leaf. (They use the bay leaves as packing material!!!) Because the cookbook suggested adding cardamom, strips of lemon zest, and a bay leaf to the chicken stock while the rice was simmering in it, and taking them out before the tempering.

You know what?  [leahbobot](https://leahbobot.livejournal.com/) (<https://leahbobot.livejournal.com/>), it makes a *big* difference. Yum!

I just went and ordered this cookbook. :-):-):-):-)

TAGS: [recipes](#)



Three things!

1) Okay, 0., She Wants Revenge = yes. It's like the Eighties rose up from the grave and came looking

Experimental Whole Wheat

Green Chile Robot Bread #1

Yes, baking with your hands is more fun. And the results have a better texture, and taste better.

[locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning

39 comments



 [dedoc](#)

April 7 2008, 13:20:35 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

"... her kitchen looks exactly like the kitchen of somebody who lives on takeout salads and sushi from Whole Paycheck...."

Oh, *shabash*. That was ... deft. Applause!



 [cvillette](#)

April 7 2008, 13:56:25 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Huh? What? Deft? Who?



[dedoc](#)

April 7 2008, 14:25:26 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Yeah.

The spiffy turn of phrase.

Yes.

You.

;-)



[cvillette](#)

April 7 2008, 14:42:24 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Hah! Hey, Ace, you're rubbing off on me!



[ace_cub_reportr](#)

April 7 2008, 15:18:08 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Use this power only for good.

 [kelliem](#)

April 7 2008, 14:15:51 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

(Now I am imagining a parody version of Potter set at a culinary school, where all the magical commands are culinary terms, and the students use whisks and wooden spoons to conjure with.)

This? Needs to be written. ;D

(and now I want to try making avgolemono!)



[cvillette](#)

April 7 2008, 14:45:03 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

I'd be sort of surprised if it didn't already exist, somewhere on the internet.



[caulay](#)

April 7 2008, 16:04:45 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

The question is, do things on the internet exist before you look for them, or, by looking, do you cause them to come into existence?

 [pnkrokhockeymom](#)

April 7 2008, 14:41:04 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

First, re: *her kitchen looks exactly like the kitchen of somebody who lives on takeout salads and sushi from Whole Paycheck*: So does mine! Except (a) I always have basil, black pepper, sea salt, cumin, chili powder, and red pepper flakes; and (b) there are also a ton of really old spices and weird supplies from when my ex used to live here and cook things besides chili or black bean soup (those are the things I cook; chili and black bean

soup). I don't know how long those last, but sometimes when I have folks here they come in handy. Oh! And I have pancake mix, for Adventures-in-Pancakes Saturdays at my place...(which I've been meaning to hint at you about potential pancakey recipes for, actually).

Second, flavor-wise, this sounds like something I would really like to eat. Particularly with some yummy sourdough. I'm a bit confused, though: what does the finished product, erm, *look* like???



 [cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 14:46:43 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I mostly make very very simple pancakes, which I will blog sometime soon.

Avgolemono is creamy, butter-yellow, and has little white flecks of soft rice in it.



 [pnkrokhockeymom](#)

[April 7 2008, 14:50:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

yay! pancakes.

I make very simple pancakes, too. The reason they are adventurous is that I've just started making pancakes, well, this past month...so every attempt brings a new adventure. :)

And I'm SOOOO making the avgolemono.



 [trollcatz](#)

[April 7 2008, 15:26:10 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

He makes reeeeally good pancakes (I just made 'em yesterday morning! With strawberries!)

And the problem with the avgolemono (you should hear what that sounds like after a couple bheers and a lot of exertion in the fresh air) is that there's no way to make enough of it. Also, I bet I could make that now, having watched. Even though I'd already had bheer.)



 [cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 15:59:24 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Maybe *you* should post the pancake recipe. As part of your training, Grasshopper....



 [trollcatz](#)

[April 7 2008, 17:35:10 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Awww. I could, but yours are more fun to read. And full of foodscience.

On the other hand, I could try to replicate the conversation in the kitchen when you taught me how to make them. That might not result in an actual pancake recipe, though. *g*



 [cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 17:37:35 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I totally wanna watch this.

 [pnkrokhockeymom](#)

April 7 2008, 17:24:00 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh! With strawberries!! YUM.

One of our adventures was the extra water from having blueberries in the batter. Another was too much oil. The cakes were deep-fried (but still tasty)!

See, I think even my fussy, fussy child would eat this with bread. It just sounds so nummy. It's making me hungry!! (And I don't think I could say it well-rested and sober with any consistency).

 [themaskmaker](#)

April 7 2008, 14:52:15 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

This sounds delicious! *she unlurks to say*

unlurking again briefly Hello, by the way. I'm Grey Walker, long time listener, first time caller.

 [cvillette](#)

April 7 2008, 15:59:37 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Hi! Nice to meet you!

 [fidelioscabinet](#)

April 7 2008, 15:35:23 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

I remember making this a good many years ago, and as I recall, that version called for whites and eggs to be beaten separately, so that you got a fair bit of frothiness in the whites, and then combined before the broth was added. It made a soup with a cap, sort of like cappuccino, only tasting entirely different.

You can add meatballs, too, if you're inclined. I'm just sayin'. Nobody's going to make you do it that way. But you can.

 [cvillette](#)

April 7 2008, 16:01:07 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, I think that that's one of the fussy Americanized versions. It's peasant food: it's not supposed to be complicated.

(According to the Cook's Illustrated book, those versions don't taste as good. Maybe I'll try one sometime as an experiment, though.

 [fidelioscabinet](#)

April 7 2008, 16:43:13 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

I can believe that; it was pretty, but the chickeny lemon froth seemed wrong, somehow.



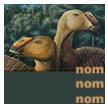
 [colomon](#)

[April 7 2008, 15:50:25 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Sounds like a simpler version of [this soup](#)?

Which is very tasty, but still not as good as the same thing at [Matsos](#) in Wooster, Ohio. (Maybe the anticipation of spaghetti pizza makes it taste better...)



 [cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 16:01:35 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

That sounds like a fussy version, indeed!

 [leahbobet](#)

[April 7 2008, 16:52:33 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Ooh hey now.

checks kitchen for cardamom and bay leaf

goes to make lunch :)

 [dichroic](#)

[April 7 2008, 17:44:17 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Hm... eggs, rice, chicken broth. Check, check, check. Lemon juice, probably check.

Ingredients available are so different in Taiwan, and I am so often wanting to make something quick after work that I am definitely saving this recipe, which seems to work on both counts*. Does it get hopelessly awful if you add more rice to bulk it up?

*This is, of course, assuming that I ever get out of this hotel ad back home to Taiwan. 6 weeks down, 3 to go.



 [cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 17:47:52 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I think you'd wind up with newspaper paste if you tried that, honestly. It's pretty thick.

 [dichroic](#)

[April 7 2008, 18:00:43 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

In the proportions you gave, is it enough for dinner for two people or just a snack?

(I don't eat eggs-that-taste-like-eggs, so end up not being all that familiar with how filling one is when it's not mixed with flour and stuff.)



[cvillette](#)

[April 7 2008, 19:09:54 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It's more than a quart of soup. You'd probably want bread and some kind of vegetable with it before you called it a meal.

 [dichroic](#)

[April 7 2008, 19:13:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Thanks!

 [adarad](#)

[April 7 2008, 19:46:33 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Avgolemono? How the heck do you even pronounce that? I'm trying phonetically but it looks like it should sound prettier than how it's coming out for me.

Looks like a super easy recipe. Though I'd have to figure out what the heck cardamom is.



 [cvillette](#)

[April 8 2008, 01:16:31 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Whatever you do, don't ask me for foreign language pronunciations. I'm banned from speaking French or Spanish at the office.



 [Ometotchli](#)

[April 8 2008, 01:28:53 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

But that's Greek. Which none of us know. (Unless maybe Dad...) So we can't stop you on that one.

 [fidelioscabinet](#)

[April 8 2008, 17:04:43 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

My best guess is something like "av-go(long O)-le(short E)-mon(short O)-o(long O)"; emphasis goes to the front of the word. A native speaker might disagree, but I think that's close.

Greek is expressive but does not sound as lyrical as Italian and Spanish.

 [keridwen](#)

[April 11 2008, 02:00:09 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

AVE-go-LEH-mohn-oh



[Sounds like...](#)

 [malthus25](#)

[April 8 2008, 17:06:28 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...chicken lemon rice soup. Or at least, that's what it was called at the two Greek-ish restaurants I've had it at. (Greek-ish, because in New Jersey you don't go to Greek restaurants, you go to Diners -- which may happen to

have extensive Greek influences, or extensive Italian influences, depending on the owners).

Yellow, creamy, lemony, chunks of chicken, some rice at the bottom. Mmmmm.



[Re: Sounds like...](#)

[inaurolillium](#)

April 8 2008, 22:02:25 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

That's exactly what it is.



[erinya](#)

April 9 2008, 06:41:36 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Intriguing. Is it possible to make this stuff with veggie stock (the kind that comes from cubes) instead of chicken, asked the vegetarian?



[cvillette](#)

April 9 2008, 10:38:49 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

It should be. The taste will be inauthentic, but then, what are you going to do?



[sylvan_eve](#)

April 11 2008, 19:50:46 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

avgolemono - oh, man, i have always wondered how that heavenly stuff is made!

i went on a tour of all diners in Belmont/Watertown MA to find the best.... i think Teddy's diner (only open for lunch) wins, but Andros is good, too. This soup goes great with gyros. I also adore the Armenian take on it at Demos, though this is just chicken lemon soup and skips the thickening with egg. (Cup of this, + lamb sandwich with rice and salad makes an extraordinary dinner - best lamb i have had, outside of yummy lamb in Iceland).

for the non-egg for taste reasons people (like me), you do NOT taste any egg when this is done well. i was totally in disbelief that there was egg in the recipe when i found out how it was made after years of eating a cup of it here and there.

i think you can use more rice. my favs do use alot of rice and chicken shreds.....

[Three things!](#)

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[Experimental Whole Wheat](#)

[Green Chile Robot Bread #1](#)

Yes, baking with your hands is more fun. And the results have a better texture, and taste better.

[\[locked\] Dream Journal](#)

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning